

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 94
By Cooper B

A RESOLUTION urging the Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation to adhere to federal policies and reports regarding environmental risk reduction in communities and the enhancement of environmental justice.

WHEREAS, the preservation of the integrity of each and every community in this fine State is a task of the utmost importance to the members of this General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, two factors inherent in protecting and improving communities within this State are the reduction of environmental risk within those communities and the enhancement of environmental justice; and

WHEREAS, many low-income communities suffer due to the presence of many environmental burdens, a problem caused in part by a history in insufficient coordination of federal and state regulations concerning the reduction of those very environmental burdens; and

WHEREAS, in response to this growing problem, the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council to the Environmental Protection Agency has called upon that agency to develop a overarching model of environmental risk reduction which holds accountable all sources of environmental burdens on human health in an effort to overcome environmental regulatory and programmatic fragmentation; and

WHEREAS, many low-income communities also suffer from a dearth of environmental justice, and many environmental dangers are exacted on the lands and waters of the areas within and surrounding the boundaries of these communities; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice, established under Executive Order 12898 (February 11, 1994) and chaired by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, has emphasized the importance of federal interagency

cooperation and necessity of federal, state, and local agency coordination in the improvement of environmental quality and the protection of health in at-risk communities; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice has proven through its Environmental Justice Demonstration Projects the effectiveness of collaboration, between community, business, and industry and between federal, state, and local governments, in improving environmental quality in low-income communities; and

WHEREAS, this Body firmly believes that such cooperation and collaboration between state and federal agencies is an important first step in preserving the environmental integrity and safety of this State's low-income communities; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that this General Assembly urges the Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation to attend to and accommodate any and all reports, findings, and recommendations of the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council to the Environmental Protection Agency and the Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice in a concerted effort to eliminate the environmental risk and enhance the environmental justice within Tennessee's communities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.